AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An appointment setting system for assigning a service order to a network resource, comprising:

an appointment negotiator operative to receive a service order from a customer and to deliver an appointment confirmation and an appointment rejection to the customer;

an appointment control system operative to receive the service order from the appointment negotiator, place the service order in a queue, and to determine the ability of a network resource to fulfill the service order when the service order is next in the queue; and

a dispatch database operative to maintain a dispatch database record of commitments previously assigned to the network resource;

wherein the appointment control system will deliver the appointment confirmation to the appointment negotiator and assigns the service order to the network resource, in response to a determination that the network resource can fulfill the service order; and

wherein the appointment control system will deliver the appointment rejection to the appointment negotiator, in response to a determination that the network resource cannot fulfill the service order.

2. (Original) The appointment setting system of Claim 1, wherein the appointment control system is a computer-implemented system that is electronically accessible by the appointment negotiator.

3. (Original) The appointment setting system of Claim 1, wherein the dispatch database record is an electronic record comprising a network resource schedule.

4. (Original) The appointment setting system of Claim 1, wherein the dispatch database record is an electronic record comprising a set of tasks to which the network resource can be assigned.

5. (Original) The appointment setting system of Claim 1, wherein the dispatch database further comprises appointments assigned to another network resource.

6. (Original) The appointment setting system of Claim 1, wherein the appointment control system is further operative to determine whether a change has occurred to the dispatch database record.

7. (Original) The appointment setting system of Claim 6, wherein the appointment control system is further operative to determine whether the change affects the appointment confirmation.

8. (Original) The appointment setting system of Claim 7, wherein the appointment control system is further operative to automatically transmit the appointment rejection to the appointment negotiator, in response to a determination that the change in response to a determination that the change affects the appointment confirmation.

9. (Original) The appointment setting system of Claim 7, wherein the appointment control system is further operative to reassign the service order to another network resource, in response to a determination that the change affects the appointment confirmation.

10. (Currently Amended) The appointment setting system of Claim [[7]] 1, wherein the appointment control system is further operative to receive the service order from a third party through a third party gateway.

11. (Currently Amended) A method for setting an appointment, the method comprising the steps of:

    receiving a service order from an appointment negotiator;

    placing the service order in a queue;

    when the service order is next in the queue, determining whether a

network resource can fulfill the service order;

  sending an appointment rejection to the appointment negotiator, in response to a determination that the network resource cannot fulfill the service order;

  sending an appointment confirmation to the appointment negotiator and assigning the service order to the network resource, in response to a determination that the network resource can fulfill the service order; and

  updating a dispatch database to reflect a reduction in a capacity value associated with the network resource, in response to sending the appointment confirmation.

  12. (Original) The method of Claim 11, wherein the service order comprises an appointment time, an appointment location, and a service task.

  13. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 11, wherein ~~the step of~~ determining whether a network resource can fulfill the service order comprises accessing the dispatch database to determine whether the network resource is qualified to perform the service task.

  14. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 11, wherein ~~the step of~~ determining whether a network resource can fulfill the service order comprises accessing the dispatch database to determine whether the network resource can be near the appointment location approximately at the appointment time.

  15. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 11, wherein ~~the step of~~ determining whether a network resource can fulfill the service order comprises accessing the dispatch database to determine whether the network resource is committed to another service order at the appointment time.

  16. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 11, wherein ~~the step of~~ updating a dispatch database to reflect a reduction in a capacity value associated with the network resource comprises modifying a dispatch database record to indicate a commitment of the

network resource to perform the service task at the appointment time and at the appointment location.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 11, further comprising ~~the step of~~ determining whether a change has occurred to the dispatch database.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 17, further comprising ~~the step of~~ determining whether the change affects the appointment confirmation, in response to a determination that the change has occurred to the dispatch database.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 18, further comprising ~~the step of~~ automatically reassigning the service order to another network resource, in response to a determination that the change affects the appointment confirmation.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 18, further comprising ~~the step of~~ delivering the appointment rejection to the appointment negotiator, in response to a determination that the change affects the appointment confirmation.

21. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 11, further comprising ~~the step of~~ receiving the service order from a third party, via a third party gateway.

22. (Currently Amended) A method for setting an appointment, the method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

receiving a service order from an appointment negotiator;

determining whether a network resource can fulfill the service order, by checking a dispatch database record associated with the network resource;

sending an appointment rejection to the appointment negotiator, in response to a determination that the network resource cannot fulfill the service order;

sending an appointment confirmation to the appointment negotiator, in response to a determination that the network resource can fulfill the service order;

assigning the appointment to the network resource;

updating the dispatch database record to reflect the assignment of the appointment to the network resource, in response to sending the appointment confirmation;

determining whether a change has occurred to the dispatch database record;

determining whether the change affects the appointment, in response to a determination that the change has occurred to the dispatch database record; and

automatically reassigning the appointment to another network resource, in response to a determination that the change affects the appointment[[;]].